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Compendium of Sacro Occipital Technique: Peer-Reviewed Literature 1984-2000

Book Review by Steven Lavitan, DC, LAc

By Steven Lavitan

Title: *Compendium of Sacro Occipital Technique: Peer-Reviewed Literature 1984-2000*

Author: Sacro Occipital Technique Organization - USA

Publisher: Eastland Press

Length: 341 pages, softcover

Category: Practitioner education

Price: \$55

Part #: T-227



A review of chiropractic history helps put this book in proper perspective. Dr. Major Bertrand DeJarnette ("the Major"), the progenitor of sacro-occipital technique (SOT), was one of the first (and quite possibly the most influential) of the low-force researchers. When I went to chiropractic school in the 1970s, the three major techniques were Gonstead, applied kinesiology and SOT.

Dr. Gonstead's brother may have studied with the Major, and the old-time SOTers felt the X-ray marking system Gonstead used was related to a system Dr. DeJarnette developed. George Goodhart's father studied with the Major, and George spent time with him as a boy. After the Palmers, many chiropractors believe

DeJarnette's influence was the most powerful.

There was a variety of information circulating about Dr. DeJarnette, including that he was an osteopath first and had been helped by Dr. William Garner Sutherland, the father of osteopathic craniopathy. One thing we know for sure is that Dr. Sutherland influenced him and his approach, particular regarding cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) flow and torque of the dura. The Major also wrote extensively about blocking technique; cranial work; pain control; bloodless surgery, which evolved into chiropractic manipulative reflex technique; extremity technique; color therapy or chromotherapy; and even nutrition.

Dr. DeJarnette self-published his research from the 1920s through the 1980s. When he passed away in the early 1990s, the Sacro Occipital Research Society International (SORSI), a collection of chiropractors with a passionate interest in the technique, helped keep SOT alive. The Sacro Occipital Technique Organization - U.S., broke from that organization for political reasons; many of the greater lights in the technique are affiliated with this organization, which published this book.

Compendium of Sacro Occipital Technique is a provocative anthology. There is a feeling in the chiropractic profession that research is necessary, and that any clinician can contribute. On a certain level, this is true, but there is no earth-shattering new discovery here. There are some interesting case reports; correlations between SOT and other forms of analysis; anatomy and physiology of the technique; and quite a bit about cranial work. All and all, it is worthwhile reading for a practitioner with an interest in SOT.

This book reminds me of the Yearbooks of Osteopathy, but with less original basic science research. Marc Pick's article is among the notable exceptions. The only reason I give the Compendium a nine instead of a 10 is that there was no continuity between the chapters, which is inadequate for someone desiring a comprehensive overview of SOT. However, for someone starting with advanced knowledge of SOT, this book will certainly prove valuable.

Dr. DeJarnette did a considerable amount of good. He synthesized a manual therapy that was the most sophisticated, comprehensive technique of the time. He pioneered and popularized the use of blocks, which in many ways are an extra pair of hands that let the sacrum float back into its proper position. My guess is that millions of people have been helped by this method over the years.

Dr. Lavitan's rating:



9 out of

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